

Message Text

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APPROVED BY H - DOUGLAS J.BENNET, JR.
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY PANAMA PRIORITY

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FOR AMBASSADOR FROM H - BENNET

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PN

SUBJECT: PANAMA CANAL TREATIES; AMENDMENT ADOPTED

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF AMENDMENT ADOPTED JANUARY 30
BY SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE:

AMEND THE TREATY CONCERNING THE PERMANENT NEUTRALITY AND
OPERATION OF THE PANAMA CANAL, AS FOLLOWS:

1. AT THE END OF ARTICLE IV, INSERT THE FOLLOWING:

"A CORRECT AND AUTHORITATIVE STATEMENT OF CERTAIN
RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF THE PARTIES UNDER THE FOREGOING IS
CONTAINED IN THE STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING ISSUED BY THE
GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ON OCTOBER 14,
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1977, AND BY THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF PANAMA ON
OCTOBER 18, 1977, WHICH IS HEREBY INCORPORATED AS AN IN-
TEGRAL PART OF THIS TREATY, AS FOLLOWS:

'UNDER THE TREATY CONCERNING THE PERMANENT NEUTRALITY
AND OPERATION OF THE PANAMA CANAL (THE NEUTRALITY TREATY),
PANAMA AND THE UNITED STATES HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY TO

ASSURE THAT THE PANAMA CANAL WILL REMAIN OPEN AND SECURE

TO SHIPS OF ALL NATIONS. THE CORRECT INTERPRETATION OF THIS PRINCIPLE IS THAT EACH OF THE TWO COUNTRIES SHALL, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THEIR RESPECTIVE CONSTITUTIONAL PROCESSES, DEFEND THE CANAL AGAINST ANY THREAT TO THE REGIME OF NEUTRALITY, AND CONSEQUENTLY SHALL HAVE THE RIGHT TO ACT AGAINST ANY AGGRESSION OR THREAT DIRECTED AGAINST THE CANAL OR AGAINST THE PEACEFUL TRANSIT OF VESSELS THROUGH THE CANAL.

"THIS DOES NOT MEAN, NOR SHALL IT BE INTERPRETED AS, A RIGHT OF INTERVENTION OF THE UNITED STATES IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF PANAMA. ANY UNITED STATES ACTION WILL BE DIRECTED AT INSURING THAT THE CANAL WILL REMAIN OPEN, SECURE, AND ACCESSIBLE, AND IT SHALL NEVER BE DIRECTED AGAINST THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OR POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE OF PANAMA."

2. AT THE END OF THE FIRST PARAGRAPH OF ARTICLE VI, INSERT THE FOLLOWING:

"IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING MENTIONED IN ARTICLE IV ABOVE: 'THE NEUTRALITY TREATY PROVIDES THAT THE VESSELS OF WAR AND AUXILIARY VESSELS OF THE UNITED STATES AND PANAMA WILL BE ENTITLED TO UNCLASSIFIED

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TRANSIT THE CANAL EXPEDITIOUSLY. THIS IS INTENDED, AND IT SHALL SO BE INTERPRETED, TO ASSURE THE TRANSIT OF SUCH VESSELS THROUGH THE CANAL AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE, WITHOUT ANY IMPEDIMENT, WITH EXPEDITED TREATMENT, AND IN CASE OF NEED OR EMERGENCY, TO GO TO THE HEAD OF THE LINE OF VESSELS IN ORDER TO TRANSIT THE CANAL RAPIDLY.'" VANCE

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